

Developmentally Appropriate Materials, Equipment and Activities

POLICY:

Materials, teacher interactions, equipment and activities will be safe and developmentally appropriate for all children. They will also reflect cultural diversity, avoid stereotyping and will match and challenge the children's skills and knowledge.

. This policy relates to [Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1302.30, 1302.31, 1302.60, 1302.61](#)

GUIDANCE:

1. Materials, equipment, and activities are selected to achieve the following goals:
 - Foster a positive self-concept
 - Develop social skills
 - Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
 - Scaffolding (Taking children to a higher learning level of thinking)
 - Encourage language development and literacy skills
 - Enhance physical development
 - Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices
 - Encourage creative expression and appreciation of the arts
 - Respect cultural diversity
2. There will be a sufficient quantity of materials and equipment to meet the individual developmental needs of the children, including those with special needs and/or disabilities.
3. Free choice time each day for children to interact with a variety of materials and activities should be 1 hour within each 3 hour block of the scheduled day.
4. Materials, equipment and activities in each interest area which will reflect the curriculum, interests and life experiences of the children.

5. Materials in all interest areas are will be unbiased (ie: men and women dress-up clothing, community helper props showing both men and women in all roles, as well as books and pictures having women in leadership roles and men in nurturing roles.)
6. Materials will be provided that vary in complexity (i.e. 5 piece puzzles as well as 10 -12 piece puzzles).
7. Various textured materials, such as play dough, finger paint, clay, sand, water, will be activity options each day.
8. Materials must be accessible, attractive, and inviting, and should be designed to provide a variety of learning experiences and enhance school readiness.
9. All materials and equipment will be stored in a safe, orderly fashion when not in use:
 - Organize all materials and equipment in a logical manner with related items stored together.
 - Store toys with small pieces in clearly labeled containers.
 - Label shelves with pictures and words to identify where items belong and to promote language development as well as self-help skills.
10. Materials and equipment will be kept in good repair with no sharp edges, broken parts, splinters, or other safety hazards.
11. Inventory materials/equipment at least once each program year.